

REMARKS

Claims 6 and 26 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in subsequently filed continuation and/or divisional applications.

Claims 1, 7, 9, 23, 27, 29, 43 and 45 have been amended.

Claims 1 - 5, 7 - 25 and 27 - 46 are present in the subject application.

In the Office Action dated February 23, 2006, the Examiner has allowed claims 22 and 42, has indicated that claims 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 26, 27, 31, 32 and 34 contain patentable subject matter and has rejected claims 1 - 5, 8 - 10, 13, 15 - 21, 23 - 25, 28 - 30, 33, 35 - 41 and 43 - 46 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Favorable reconsideration of the subject application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Initially, the Examiner has allowed claims 22 and 42, and has objected to claims 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 26, 27, 31, 32 and 34 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner further indicated that the claims under objection would be allowable if re-written in independent form.

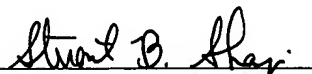
Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 23 have been amended to include the features of claims 6 and 26, respectively, and are considered to be in condition for allowance. In addition, independent claims 43 and 45 have been amended to similarly include the patentable features of claims 6 and 26, respectively, and are also considered to be in condition for allowance. The submission of the above claim amendments is not intended to reflect the propriety of the Examiner's position with respect to the rejections, but rather, are for purposes of expediting prosecution of the subject application.

Claims 2 - 5, 7 - 21, 24 - 41, 44 and 46 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claims 1, 23, 43 or 45 and, therefore include all the limitations of their parent claims.

Claims 7, 9, 27 and 29 have been amended for consistency with their amended parent claims. The dependent claims are considered to be in condition for allowance for substantially the same reasons discussed above in relation to their parent claims and for further limitations recited in the dependent claims.

The application, having been shown to overcome issues raised in the Office Action, is considered to be in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


Stuart B. Shapiro
Registration No. 40,169

EDELL, SHAPIRO & FINNAN, LLC
1901 Research Boulevard, Suite 400
Rockville, Maryland 20850-3164
(301) 424-3640

Hand-delivered: _____